

MESSAGE FORM

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GACarver, Jr.

DCI/SAVA

9 Apr 71

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SAVA

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10:00 33Z APR 71

CITE DIRECTOR

(elite)

(pica)

PRIORITY SAIGON

Sac Chono

1. FOLLOWING FYI RE SENATOR EAGLETON. ON 9 MARCH, AT

SENATOR'S REQUEST LEVIED THROUGH LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

SPENT ABOUT TWO HOURS DISCUSSING WHOLE INDOCHINA

SITUATION WITH EAGLETON AND VOSSMEYER IN SENATOR'S OFFICE.

MUCH OF THAT DISCUSSION REVOLVED AROUND LAM SON 719, THEN

IN PROGRESS. OUR PITCH WAS THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE WITH THEIR

LIFELINE THREATENED WERE OBVIOUSLY DETERMINED TO FIGHT AS
HARD AS POSSIBLE WITH ALL RESOURCES THEY ~~XXX~~ COULD MUSTER.ALSO EXPLAINED HANOI'S CONTINUING CONCERN FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL
WARFARE AND POLITICAL IMAGERY WHICH WOULD LEAD COMMUNISTS

TO CLAIM GREAT VICTORIES REGARDLESS OF RELATIVE CASUALTY

RATES OR WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED AND, FURTHER, COULD LEAD

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PAGE TWO

HANOI TO SPEND FURTHER MANPOWER CAPITAL IN EFFORT TO CONVEY IMPRESSION IT PLAYING FROM STRENGTH AND ITS CAPACITIES UNDIMINISHED. ON ULTIMATE IMPACT LAM SON 719, WE TOOK TACK THAT IT FAR TOO EARLY TO TELL AND THAT PROOF OF PUDDING WOULD BE SEEN IN RELATIVE LEVELS OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITY, OR INACTIVITY, IN SVN DURING LATE SPRING AND SUMMER.

2. AROUND FIRST OF APRIL, EAGLETON ASKED IF HE COULD TALK TO ² [] ONCE MORE PRIOR TO LEAVING FOR TRIP. RESPONDING TO THAT REQUEST, [] WENT TO SENATOR'S OFFICE

ON 6 APRIL FOR ANOTHER SESSION WITH EAGLETON AND VOSSMEYER. MOST OF 6 APRIL SESSION ALSO DEVOTED TO GENERAL SITUATION BUT TOWARD END OF THE DISCUSSION EAGLETON DID ASK POINT BLANK WHETHER ³ [] OR, SPECIFICALLY, [] WAS ESSAYING INFLUENCE ROLE IN SOUTH VIETNAM PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

² [] REPLIED THAT WE WERE NOT, STRESSING THAT FOR VARIETY OF REASONS INCLUDING NARROW PRAGMATIC SELF-INTEREST, IT

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PAGE THREE

WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE FOR ³ [] TO FISH IN THESE
WATERS. THIEU WAS IN STRONG POSITION, HAD ALL THE ADVANTAGES
OF INCUMBANCY AND CLEARLY INTENDED TO EXPLOIT THEM -- JUST
AS EVERY U.S. PRESIDENT RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION ALWAYS HAD.
ASSUMING ECONOMY STAYED ON EVEN KEEL AND LEVEL OF COMMU-
NIST ACTIVITY DID NOT RISE TOO SHARPLY, ALL THIEU REALLY HAD
TO DO TO WIN WAS AVOID MAKING MISTAKES, ESPECIALLY ONES THAT
HANDED HIS OPPONENTS EMOTIONALLY CHARGED ISSUES. IF THIEU
EXERTED HIMSELF ALONG LINES THAT ALL SIGNS NOW INDICATED
HE WOULD FOLLOW AND IF HE AVOIDED MAKING MAJOR ERRORS, HE
SHOULD BE ABLE TO WIN HONESTLY AND COMFORTABLY. PRECISE
MARGIN OF VICTORY WOULD DEPEND ON HOW MANY CANDIDATES
RUNNING AND WHO OPPONENTS WERE PLUS COURSE OF EVENTS IN
ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND POLITICAL FIELD BETWEEN NOW AND
OCTOBER. THERE WAS NO NEED OR REASON WHY U.S. SHOULD WANT
TO INTERFERE IN SVN'S INTERNAL POLITICAL PROCESSES.

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3. WE ROUNDED OFF ABOVE PITCH, HOWEVER, BY EXPLAINING
VIETNAMESE FONDNESS FOR ^{AND} AN INCURABLE ADDICTION TO CONSPIRACY
THEORIES. WE STRESSED THAT WHATEVER BE THE FACTS, VIETNAMESE
OF ALL STRIPES WOULD TELL OTHER VIETNAMESE, AND ANY
FOREIGNERS WHO WOULD LISTEN, THAT ³ [] HEAVILY INVOLVED
IN CAMPAIGN. SAIGON RUMOR FACTORY WOULD BE WORKING OVERTIME
AND SOME OF ITS MORE ELABORATE PRODUCTS WOULD DOUBTLESS BE
PEDDLED TO SENATOR AND VOSSMEYER DURING THEIR STAY. EAGLETON
SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THIS VERY WELL AND THAT SUCH RUMORS WOULD
BE INEVITABLE NO MATTER WHAT WE DID.

4. THROUGHOUT BOTH SESSIONS, EAGLETON WAS RELAXED,
AFFABLE AND PLEASANT. HE CLEARLY OPPOSED TO WAR []

[] BUT HE WAS NEVER ARGUMENTATIVE OR
DOGMATIC. WHEN WE TOUCHED ON UNIVERSALITY OF PRACTICE
WHEREBY INCUMBENT CANDIDATES EXPLOIT ADVANTAGES OF THEIR

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PAGE FIVE

OFFICE, EAGLETON VIGOROUSLY ASSENTED AND THREW IN A FEW
TRENCHANT EXAMPLES OF HIS OWN. HE HAS HIS AXE TO GRIND BUT,
WITH US, WAS CORDIAL AND FRANK IN GRINDING IT.

25X1

5. PLEASE INFORM US OF ANY CONVERSATIONS YOU HAVE WITH
EAGLETON OR ANY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL PARTIES NOW VISITING
SAIGON. ASSUME YOU KNOW THAT CONGRESSMAN WILSON IS MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE OF HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE.

END OF MESSAGE

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